

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 3609

MADRID ALSO FOR AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDEV, PINT, PO

SUBJ: ROSA COUTINHO ON REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL DECLARATION
AND ON "PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATIONS"

1. ADMIRAL ROSA COUTINHO TOLD ME AT LUNCH TODAY THAT THE
DECLARATION ISSUED BY THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL ON JUNE 21 WAS
THE PRODUCT OF MUCH DEBATE. HE SAID THAT THE DECLARATION SOUGHT
PRIMARILY "TO CLARIFY" THE POLITICAL SITUATION AND SET FORTH
THE GENERAL LINES OF FUTURE DEVELOPMENT.

2. WHEN QUERIED, HE READILY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT "CLARIFICATION"
WAS ALSO NEEDED INSIDE THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL BECAUSE THERE
WERE DIFFERING CURRENTS OF THOUGHT. HE ADDED THAT THE REVOLU-
TIONARY COUNCIL ALL AGREED ON SOCIALISM AS A GOAL, BUT THERE
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WERE SO MANY VARIETIES OF SOCIALISM AND SOCIALISM MEANT SO

MANY DIFFERENT THINGS TO DIFFERENT PEOPLE THAT CONFUSION RESULTED. ROSA COUTINHO SAID THAT, IN HIS VIEW, SUCH DIVERGENCE AND EVEN CONFUSION WAS NOT NECESSARILY A BAD THING FOR PORTUGAL, SINCE THOUGHTS HAD NORMALLY BEEN IMPOSED ON THE PORTUGUESE PEOPLE DURING THE LAST HALF CENTURY. HE WOULD NOT BE DRAWN OUT ON HOW THE MEMBERS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL LINED UP ON THE ISSUES DISCUSSED IN THEIR DECLARATION.

3. I ASKED ROSA COUTINHO TO EXPLAIN WHERE THE "POPULAR ORGANIZATIONS" REFERRED TO AT VARIOUS POINTS IN THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL DECLARATION FITTED IN. HE SAID HE WOULD TRY BUT THAT HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND IT ALL HIMSELF, NOR DID ANYBODY. HE SAID THAT THE BASIC POINT TO BEAR IN MIND WAS THAT ORGANIZATIONS OF ALL TYPES WERE SPRINGING UP SPONTANEOUSLY IN PORTUGAL--TENANT GROUPS, NON-UNION WORKINGMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS, EVEN SOCIAL AND CHARITABLE GROUPS. THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL ITSELF HAD DIFFICULTY KEEPING TRACK OF THEM, BUT DID NOT WANT TO SUPPRESS THESE ORGANIZATIONS. THE REASONS FOR NONSUPPRESSION, ACCORDING TO ROSA COUTINHO, ARE TWO: SUPPRESSION RECALLS THE PREVIOUS REGIME AND THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL IS COMMITTED TO NOT LOOKING LIKE THE OLD REGIME; MOST OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL LIKES SPONTANEITY AND FEELS IT IS PART OF THEIR MISSION TO ENCOURAGE IT, EVEN AT THE COST OF CONFUSION.

4. I NOTED THAT REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL'S TOLERANCE DID NOT APPEAR TO EXTEND TO PERMITTING THESE SPONTANEOUS GROUPS TO BEAR ARMS. ROSA COUTINHO NODDED VIGOROUSLY THAT BEARING ARMS WAS NOT TO BE ACCEPTED. IN THIS CONNECTION HE SAID THAT THE "IRRESPONSIBLE LEFT" WAS VERY UNHAPPY WITH THE REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL'S DECLARATION FOR THAT REASON, AMONG OTHERS. HE DID NOT REPLY WHEN I ASKED HIM WHOM HE WOULD CLASSIFY AS THE "RESPONSIBLE LEFT."

5. COMMENT: ROSA COUTINHO CLEARLY SOUGHT TO BE REASSURING DURING THIS CONVERSATION. NONETHELESS, THERE IS A KERNEL OF TRUTH IN HIS REMARKS REGARDING SPONTANEITY OF "POPULAR ORGANIZATIONS" AND THE UNTIDINESS THAT THEY ENGENDER.
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